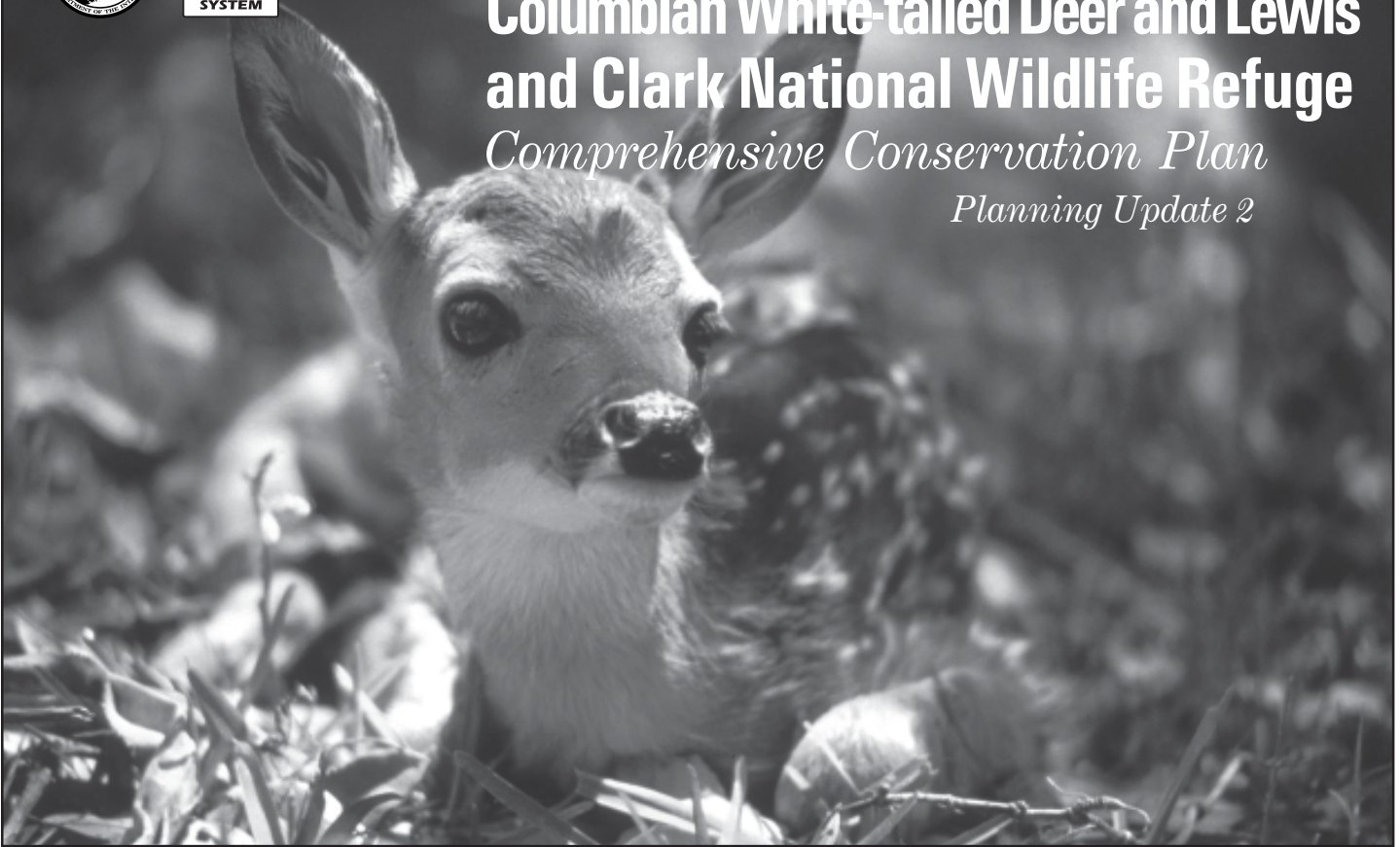




# Julia Butler Hansen Refuge for the Columbian White-tailed Deer and Lewis and Clark National Wildlife Refuge

## *Comprehensive Conservation Plan Planning Update 2*



*White-tailed deer fawn. Photo USFWS.*

## Greetings

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) is developing a Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Lewis and Clark National Wildlife Refuge and the Julia Butler Hansen Refuge for the Columbian White-tailed Deer (Refuges). The CCP will guide management of the Refuges for the next 15 years.

Throughout the CCP planning and public involvement process we collect comments from the public, conservation organizations, and local, State, Tribal, and Federal government agencies. A summary of the comments we have received from our partners and the public so far, begins on page 2.

## Thank you for Participating!

Thank you to everyone who has provided comments. We invite you to continue sharing your ideas with us, your continued participation will be critical to the success of this planning effort.

As part of determining the scope of the CCP, the Service developed a list of preliminary issues and concerns. These issues were described in Planning Update 1; presented at public meetings held October 17, 19, 23, and 24, 2006; and outlined in a Federal Register notice.

In September 2006, we mailed copies of Planning Update 1 to the CCP mailing list of approximately 105 agencies and individuals.

Copies were also distributed at the CCP public meetings, Refuge offices, and community meetings.

Planning Update 1 described the CCP process; identified the Refuges' purposes, preliminary issues, and wildlife and habitat goals; and provided a comment form. Distributing it helped us expand our mailing list and obtain your suggestions for consideration in managing the Refuges.

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# Summary of Public Scoping

## Public Comments Received

The issues, concerns, and opportunities identified by the Service, its partners, and the public during public scoping are summarized in the following paragraphs. These issues will provide the basis for drafting management alternatives, objectives, and strategies for future public review and comment.

## Issue outside the Scope of the Planning Process

The topic of most concern is the proposed Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) Plant near Bradford, Oregon, which is outside the Refuges' jurisdiction, and the scope of the CCP. The proposed construction and long term industrial influence/impacts on the estuary and adjacent Refuge resources, are of primary concern to the public. Refuge staff will coordinate with the appropriate Service programs regarding potential impacts to natural resources from the proposed LNG project.

## Wildlife and Habitat

Many respondents identified managing for healthy native habitats, eliminating pollution and invasive species around the Refuges, and designating the lands that qualify as wilderness as the most important issues. We received a wide range of comments regarding predator management on Julia Butler Hansen Refuge and a request to provide a biological assessment and inventory of all habitats, flora, and fauna prior to developing wildlife dependent recreational uses.

## Population Management of Predators to Protect Columbia White-tailed Deer (CWT) Fawns

The Service received a wide range of comments regarding predator management on Julia Butler Hansen Refuge. Questions were asked about the impacts of coyotes, cougars, and dogs on the CWT population. The CCP/EIS will address this issue in detail.

## Columbian White-tail Deer Population

The endangered CWT population and the potential to remove (delist) this species from the Endangered Species list, drew public comment and interest. The Planning Team will integrate the biological and habitat needs of the CWT into the CCP/EIS as a step toward meeting the recovery goals for this species.



*Birdwatching on a refuge. Photo:USFWS*

## Dredge Spoils within the Lewis and Clark Refuge's Administrative Boundary

A number of comments were received regarding dredge spoil management within the Lewis and Clark Refuge's administrative boundary. As part of the CCP process, the Service will explore options for supporting wildlife habitat needs in these areas.

## Healthy Native Habitats

A majority of comments received were in regards to the Refuges maintaining healthy native habitats for wildlife. A number of comments referred to the Service's primary goal, "wildlife comes first," suggesting that it should be the Refuges' priority in guiding any and all management decisions. Providing for healthy native habitats will be a priority in developing the CCP/EIS.

## Oregon State Lands inside the Lewis and Clark Refuge Administrative Boundary

It was recommended that the Refuge review management of Oregon State lands within the Lewis and Clark Refuge boundary for continuity of management and to reduce administrative redundancy. The Service will address this issue in partnership with the Division of State Lands as part of the CCP process.

## Wilderness

A large majority of the respondents recommend that the Service propose wilderness designation for the lands within the Refuges' boundaries that qualify. As part of the CCP process, the Service, under the guidelines of the Wilderness Act, will conduct a wilderness review of Refuge lands to determine the potential for wilderness suitability.

## Recreation and Other Public Uses

A summary of the comments received regarding recreation and other public uses follows. All public use activities will be reviewed for appropriateness and compatibility during the CCP process.

### Wildlife Observation, Photography, Environmental Education and Interpretation

A majority of the comments received during scoping noted that bird-watching, wildlife observation, and kayaking are the most popular public uses of the Refuges. Some stated that human disturbance to wildlife should be minimized by restricting further development and access. Others recommended new trails be built to provide more wildlife viewing opportunities. Respondents identified and made recommendations to increase the Refuges' interpretive and educational messages by developing brochures, displays and educational programs.



*Elk are present on both Refuges.  
Photo: USFWS.*

## Hunting and Fishing

Some comments stated that the Service is doing a good job managing hunting activities at current levels. Others stated that Refuges should not continue to allow hunting or fishing activities. The Service has been implementing an approved Elk Management Plan since 2004. It will be integrated into the CCP/EIS as necessary.

### Commercial Guiding

One comment suggested that if commercial guiding is found compatible that the Refuges should review and manage the effects frequently. Others said they oppose commercial uses on the Refuges.



*The Refuges provide opportunities for fishing.  
Photo: USFWS.*

## DRAFT VISION STATEMENTS

### Julia Butler Hansen Refuge for the Columbian White-tailed Deer

Julia Butler Hansen Refuge for the Columbian White-tailed Deer is a stronghold for the conservation of this once nearly extinct species. Columbian white-tailed deer and other wildlife thrive here in a mosaic of meadows, wetlands, and riparian forests characteristic of the lower Columbia River watershed. Natural processes and management activities support a broad range of native plants and wildlife from Sitka spruce swamps to wild salmon. The Refuge staff works closely with a variety of partners, both on and off the Refuge, to accomplish Refuge purposes.

### Lewis and Clark National Wildlife Refuge

Named for the famed explorers, the landscape and rich wildlife of this Refuge have changed very little in the past 200 years. Modern-day explorers visit this Refuge to experience its wilderness qualities and enjoy the abundant wildlife resources. Native species of migratory birds, wild salmon, and other native plants and animals thrive where natural processes take precedence within the varied habitats of Sitka spruce swamps, riparian forest, tidal marshes, mudflats, and sand bars typical of the Columbia River estuary today and 200 years ago.



# Your Comments are Important

Your comments help shape the future of the Refuges. To learn more about the Refuges visit our website:

<http://www.fws.gov/willapa/>

## For Information on the National Wildlife Refuges:

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Visit the Refuge Planning Website:

<http://www.fws.gov/pacific/planning/>

## Tentative Planning Schedule

### Planning Step

### Target Date

Planning Update 1 (issued).....September 2006

Public Meetings (completed).....October 2006

Planning Update 2 (issued).....February 2007

Planning Update 3.....August 2007

Draft CCP/EIS Public Review/Comment..Spring/Summer 2008

Final CCP.....Winter 2008

*Schedule dates are tentative and subject to change as the  
planning process progresses.*



*U.S. Department of the Interior  
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*Address correction requested*

## ***In this issue:***

Review a summary  
of the public  
comments we  
received regarding  
the Julia Butler  
Hanson and Lewis  
and Clark National  
Wildlife Refuges.

Visit our website: <http://www.fws.gov/willapa/>